1: Longrigg G-4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

The Health Department, criticized for an unprecedented malaria epidemic in Baghdad in 1936, seemed to call for reform and for a broader activity which should include the rural and backward areas as well as the towns. The period was one of many municipal improvements and considerable building and town-planning. Electric power and light, widened streets, a modern water-supply, improved conservancy, municipal gardens—these were now features of all but the humblest *baladiyas*. It was, indeed, the policy of Yasin Pasha to encourage the devolution of the local services into municipal hands, and funds were provided accordingly; later Prime Ministers followed his example. The passage into law of a Labour Code in 1936 reflected pressure on Government to insist, at least ostensibly, on something of modern standards in the treatment of industrial workers; but the Code had for the moment little practical effect. A law of 1935 prohibiting non-'Iraqis from practising certain trades seemed to threaten domiciled Indians, and was suitably amended and scarcely enforced. The 1936 law abolishing, under severe penalties, the use of Turkish titles—Pasha, Bey, and Effendi—in favour of the simple Arabic 'Sayid'—Master, or Mr.—was widely ignored among the general public and by Europeans, as indeed by Ministers themselves and by others in authority.

The application of the National Service Law, passed in 1934, devolved upon the Hashimi Ministry and could not but be imperfect. Wide tribal areas were in practice exempt; the accessible and the weak were exploited. Armed resistance, as has been seen, was not infrequent, desertion was common, and the payment of a low exemption fee to escape service was habitual. The machinery of recruitment was inefficient, census lists inaccurate, and the resulting military forces habitually below their authorized strength. Nevertheless, the 'Iraq Army, with its British Military Mission constantly in support, improved its training and equipment and its housing facilities, and was highly favoured by King Ghazi. Increasing from some 11,500 men in 1933 to double that number by the end of 1936, it was now organized in two divisions and, territorially, into four districts. Its armament and capacity were sufficient for internal purposes, its corps of officers good in the lower, indifferent or poor in the higher ranks. Unused on any operations in 1934—a unique event—the Army was busy with tribal suppression in the two years following, and was shortly to emerge as the arbiter of 'Iraq's political destinies. The Royal 'Iraq Air Force grew from a few machines to three formed squadrons.

The small surviving force of 'Iraq Levies, some 1,500 strong, was now specialized to aerodrome-guard duties under R.A.F. Command, and the Assyrian monopoly therein had been broken

1: Longrigg G 4, 5 (ca. 1915-1940) MH1 Iraq MH1

by the recruitment of Kurdish and Arab companies. The 'Iraq Police, with diminished British participation, remained a smart and reliable service adapted well to its increasing duties. It contained, during those years, rather less than 9,000 men, including a mobile force of some 750. The Royal Air Force, which since 1932 played no part in 'Iraq's internal security in spite of occasional requests by Government to do so, maintained its own bases and training installations. Mosul and Hinaydi camps and airports and former R.A.F. landing-grounds throughout 'Iraq were handed to the 'Iraq authorities at the close of this period, and the R.A.F. began to install itself, late in 1936, at Dhibban camp by Lake Habbaniya.

Financial administration continued to show the prudence and orthodoxy with which 'Iraqi finances had been handled from the first. This was the easier since the period of depression ended with 1933, and the years following showed a relatively prosperous situation. Improvements were introduced into income-tax and land-revenue procedure and Customs administration. The currency was stable and respected. The last remnant of foreign debt was extinguished; but discussions on a new loan, to be obtained in London through Baring Bros., had up to 1937 no practical issue. The oil dead-rents first received in 1932, and later the royalties, were allotted to capital works—irrigation projects, buildings, roads—included in a programme of which the items were revised in 1931, 1935, and almost annually thereafter. A law establishing an Agricultural and Industrial Bank was passed in 1935; it commenced operations, humbly at first, in the following year.

4. BAKR ṢIDQI

The Hashimi Ministry, more forceful than any 'Iraq Government since 1932, appeared by midsummer 1935 likely to endure for a long spell of office. Yasin Pasha openly anticipated ten years of power, though, little as he esteemed democracy, he had no thought of dictatorship. The tribes were frightened, the Palace weak, the opposition outwardly subdued.

But less obvious forces were at work. The King, his own position enfeebled by his personal shortcomings and the misalliance and flight of his sister with a Rhodian hotel servant and her conversion to Christianity, was willing to see a change of Ministry and even hinted at this to Yasin through intermediaries. In the Cabinet, though a scarcely anticipated harmony reigned between Yasin and Nuri Sa'id, his Foreign Minister, the latter was at constant loggerheads with the Minister of Interior. Rashid 'Ali, indeed, gave offence by his impetuous decisions, his favouritism, and the avarice which in defiance of precedent led him, when Sayid Mahmud the Naqib died in 1936, himself to assume the